



KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

NEWS RELEASE

No. 15-098

September 4, 2015

MEDIA CONTACT: Rebecca Blessing

E-mail: rebecca.blessing@education.ky.gov

PRUITT LIKELY TO BE NAMED NEXT COMMISSIONER

(FRANKFORT, Ky.) – The Kentucky Board of Education announced late today that Stephen Pruitt will likely be the next Kentucky commissioner of education, pending the outcome of a background check, a vote by the board and successful contract negotiations.

“Dr. Pruitt is very excited for the opportunity and has indicated to the board that, if offered the job, he would accept,” Kentucky Board of Education Chair Roger Marcum said. “He brings a wealth of educational experience from the classroom, the state and the national levels. He is personable and a good communicator. The board feels very fortunate to have someone of his caliber and we are confident that Dr. Pruitt will continue to strengthen the tradition of excellence in Kentucky public education.”

Pruitt is currently senior vice president at Achieve, Inc., an independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit education reform organization, where he has served since 2010. Pruitt’s prior experience includes chief of staff, associate state superintendent, director of academic standards, and science and mathematics program manager with the Georgia Department of Education; and high school chemistry teacher in Fayetteville and Tyrone, Georgia. He earned a bachelor’s degree from North Georgia College and State University; a master’s from the University of West Georgia and a Doctorate of Philosophy from Auburn University.

“Kentucky has a great history of reform, of doing great things for Kentucky’s kids,” Pruitt said. “I think I bring a unique perspective to the position – having been a classroom teacher, which is where my heart will always be – to working at the state and national levels. I look forward to working with teachers, principals, superintendents, the Kentucky Department of Education staff, legislators and all of the education partners around the state to make the students of Kentucky prepared for their next step in life.”

Pruitt was one of two remaining candidates in the running for the commissioner position. The other candidate, Christopher Koch, the interim president of the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) and former Illinois commissioner of education, withdrew from consideration this afternoon.

(more)

Visit our website at <http://www.education.ky.gov>

Follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/kydeptofed and Like us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/kydeptofed

Marcum would not say whether one candidate was the favorite.

“We felt very good about both of our remaining candidates,” he said. “I think the board would have been happy with either Dr. Koch or Dr. Pruitt.”

Once the background check on Pruitt is complete, provided there are no issues, Chair Roger Marcum will call a special meeting of the Kentucky Board of Education. At that time, the board is expected to vote to offer Pruitt the job as commissioner. The meeting will likely be scheduled within the next few weeks. Once the terms of the commissioner’s contract are negotiated, the board is expected to ratify it at the regular meeting on October 6.

No start date has been announced for the next commissioner, but Marcum said Pruitt is “anxious to get started.”

Associate Commissioner and General Counsel Kevin C. Brown is serving as interim commissioner until the new commissioner is hired and can begin his duties.

###